

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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TAGS: PINT, RP
SUBJ: LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS: MARCOS INTERVIEWED ON TELEVISION

1. SUMMARY: ON A "MEET THE PRESS" TV INTERVIEW, PRESIDENT MARCOS COMMENTED ON RP-US MILITARY BASES NEGOTIATIONS (SEPTEL) AND SAID BILATERAL TRADE TALKS COULD BEGIN AS SOON AS THE "BASIC ISSUES" OF THE BASE TALKS ARE SETTLED. HE ALSO ATTACKED ALLEGED FOREIGN MEDDLING IN THE ELECTIONS, SAYING HE HAS "ALL KINDS OF EVIDENCE" WHICH "CANNOT BE REVEALED." ON AQUINO, HE SAID THE COURTS WOULD HAVE TO DECIDE WHETHER HE COULD SIT IN THE INTERIM BATASANG PAMBANSA IF ELECTED. END SUMMARY.

2. PRESIDENT MARCOS WAS INTERVIEWED BY THREE NEWSPAPER EDITORS ON "MEET THE PRESS" TELEVISION PROGRAM MARCH 8. IN ADDITION TO COMMENT ON MILITARY BASES NEGOTIATIONS (SEPTEL), MARCOS BRIEFLY DISCUSSED PHILIPPINE-US TRADE TALKS. HE NOTED THAT "AT PRESENT THERE IS NOT MUCH BEING DONE ABOUT THIS. AS YOU KNOW, WE ARE COMPLAINING ABOUT THE TREATMENT OF SOME OF OUR PRODUCTS LIKE COCONUT OIL AND MAHOGANY." TRADING BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES IS NOW ON A FREE-WHEELING BASIS, HE SAID, AND SOME TRADE PROBLEMS
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ARE BEING TAKEN UP IN MULTILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS. HOWEVER, "AS SOON AS WE SETTLE THE BASIC ISSUES ON THE MILITARY ARRANGEMENTS, WE CAN MOVE INTO THE ECONOMIC AGREEMENT." (MEANWHILE, AT A RALLY, INDUSTRY SECRETARY PATERNO, WHO IS A GOVERNMENT PARTY CANDIDATE, CONTINUED THE GOP'S ATTACK ON "NATIONAL TREATMENT" (MANILA 2533). PATERNO SAID THE AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE HAD TOLD THE GOP IT DOES NOT

SEEK PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT, BUT THE U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT HAS MADE THE DEMAND. "THIS WOULD NOT BE IN ACCORD WITH OUR DESIRE TO STAND AS A SOVEREIGN REPUBLIC.")

3. MARCOS ALSO STRUCK THE RECURRING CHORD OF FOREIGN INFLUENCE IN THE ELECTIONS. ASKED WHETHER THERE WAS EVIDENCE OF FOREIGN MEDDLING, MARCOS BRISTLED: "I AM NOT IN THE HABIT OF SAYING ANYTHING WITHOUT BASIS, WITHOUT EVIDENCE. I HAVE ALL KINDS OF EVIDENCE REGARDING THIS, BUT SOME CANNOT BE REVEALED. WE KNOW THAT THERE ARE EFFORTS TO INFLUENCE THE COMING ELECTIONS FROM SOURCES THAT ARE NOT DOMESTIC BUT FOREIGN." ASKED WHETHER THIS WAS MERELY MORAL SUPPORT, MARCOS SAID: "I AM AGHAST AT THE CASUAL REMARKS OF THE CANDIDATES OF THE OPPOSITION TO THE EFFECT THAT THEY WILL BE SUPPORTED BY FOREIGN ELEMENTS. DO YOU THINK THAT STRANGERS GIVE YOU SUPPORT WITHOUT SOME KIND OF CONSIDERATION?" MARCOS SAID KBL PARTY POLICY IS "NOT TO MIND ALL THE WILD AND EXCESSIVE, ABUSIVE, CHILDISH STATEMENTS" OF THE OPPOSITION. HOWEVER, WHEN THE STATEMENTS TEND TO AFFECT NATIONAL SECURITY, THEN HE WILL STEP IN. THIS APPLIES TO FOREIGN INTERVENTION IN ELECTIONS, HE SAID. "NO MATTER HOW ANYONE JUSTIFIES IT, INTERVENTION IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF THE COUNTRY BY ANYONE, WHETHER AS A SUPPOSED FRIEND OR OPEN FOE, IS DANGEROUS. YOU KNOW WE HAVE SUFFERED TOO MUCH FROM FOREIGN INTERVENTION."

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4. THE PRESIDENT DEFENDED DEFENSE SECRETARY ENRILE'S TELEVISED ATTACKS ON OPPOSITION LEADER BENIGNO AQUINO (MANILA 3618). HE SAID THE EVIDENCE ENRILE PRESENTED WAS "WELL KNOWN TO MANY PEOPLE IN CENTRAL LUZON AND TO THE MILITARY," BUT THE GOP DID NOT INTEND TO MAKE IT PUBLIC UNTIL ENRILE "WAS FORCED TO DO IT." ASKED WHETHER AQUINO WOULD BE ALLOWED TO SIT IN THE INTERIM LEGISLATURE IF ELECTED, MARCOS SAID THIS "WOULD HAVE TO BE DECIDED BY THE COURTS." HE SAID AQUINO WOULD BE DISQUALIFIED UNDER THE CONSTITUTION IF HE IS ULTIMATELY FOUND GUILTY OF THE CHARGES AGAINST HIM.

5. IN RESPONSE TO OTHER QUESTIONS, THE PRESIDENT MADE THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

-- (A) IF ELECTED, MRS. MARCOS IS REQUIRED BY THE CONSTITUTION TO CHOOSE BETWEEN REMAINING AS METRO-MANILA GOVERNOR OR ACCEPTING HER POSITION IN THE INTERIM LEGISLATURE;

-- (B) HE WILL NOT PERMIT INTRODUCTION OF ANY BILL WHICH

WOULD PROLONG THE INTERIM LEGISLATURE'S TERM BEYOND
SIX YEARS, AND HE MIGHT BE ABLE TO LIFT MARTIAL LAW
EVEN BEFORE THE INTERIM LEGISLATURE'S TERM EXPIRES;

-- (C) ANY CABINET MEMBER WHO LOSES HIS BID FOR ELECTION
TO THE IBP WILL BE DROPPED FROM THE CABINET, BUT HE
IS NOT PRESENTLY PLANNING A CABINET RESHUFFLE.
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